

recognition of its 100th anniversary of tremendous service in the town of Amherst, I ask this honorable body join me in honoring the Egbertsville Hose Company.

HONORING MS. BETTYE BANKS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the retirement and celebrate the career of a true community leader, Ms. Bettye Banks. This year will mark 30 years of her outstanding service with Consumer Credit Counseling of Greater Dallas, with whom she has dedicated her professional career to providing financial education to citizens of North Texas.

Ms. Banks began her career as a secretary with Consumer Credit Counseling of Dallas in 1978. Her work ethic, diligence, and intellect allowed her to easily move up through the ranks, serving as office manager and counselor, among other positions.

In 1990, Ms. Banks singlehandedly created the education program, aimed at teaching financial wellness and literacy. Today, Ms. Banks is the senior vice-president for Consumer Counseling of Dallas and responsible for overseeing the financial wellness initiatives of the Education Department. With her vision and leadership, the department has also grown to include 41 individual presentations on money and credit related topics. Ms. Banks has truly been an asset to the department and has left a lasting impression on its growth and impact in the community.

In a true testament to her spirit, while working full time at CCCS Dallas, she completed her bachelor's degree in applied business practice. She has also earned professional certification as a Consumer Credit Counselor, Certified Financial Counseling Executive and Housing Counselor.

Among her many accomplishments, Ms. Banks has authored a series of consumer-finance workbooks and taught over 3,000 seminars and workshops. Her reputation as an expert in the fields has generated contributions in multiple publications, including *Today's Dallas Woman* and *Dallas Family*. She has appeared on CBS, NBC and ABC and is sought out as a conference speaker on the topics of financial wellness.

Additionally, Ms. Banks is an active community leader, serving on the boards of the Greater Dallas Rotary Club, the Dallas Legal Roundtable, and Friends of Consumer Freedom, among others. She has been a member of numerous local organizations including the North Texas Affordable Housing Coalition, Family Financial Advisory Council and the Dallas Downtown Rotary.

There is no doubt that Ms. Banks has generated a monumental legacy at CCCS Dallas. Through her drive and fortitude, she has undoubtedly elevated the organization, and her leadership will be missed. At this milestone in her life, I would like to take the time to commend her for her commitment to the community and education. I extend my best wishes for her retirement and thank her for her invaluable friendship.

RECOVERY REBATES AND ECONOMIC STIMULUS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. AL GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2008*

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, today, Congress passed a \$146 billion, bipartisan economic stimulus bill that will quickly send hundreds of dollars to poor and middle-class working families while offering businesses one-time incentives to invest in new equipment. Although there is much more to do if we are to meet the needs of American families, including extending unemployment benefits and food stamps, I believe that this stimulus is an important first step in our effort to help hardworking Americans.

This broad-based stimulus package will provide tax relief of up to \$600 per individual and \$1,200 per married couple, plus an additional \$300 per child. Recovery rebate checks could be sent as early as mid-May, getting money to Americans who will spend it immediately to reinvigorate the economy. In Texas alone, approximately 8.6 million families will receive rebates averaging over \$900. Nationwide, over 111 million families would receive these rebate checks, including 35 million with earnings too low to pay income taxes. More than 19 million of these are families with children and 13 million are struggling seniors. Nearly \$50 billion of the rebate will go to middle-income Americans and those aspiring to it. Economists estimate that each dollar of broad tax cuts leads to \$1.26 in economic growth.

The economic stimulus bill also helps address the crisis we are facing in our home mortgage market by permitting more borrowers facing defaults to refinance through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). For 2008, the bill increases the FHA loan limits up to \$729,750 from \$362,790 to expand affordable mortgage loan opportunities for families at risk of foreclosure. In addition, the bill also enhances credit availability in the mortgage market by including a 1-year increase in the conforming loan limits for single family homes from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac from \$417,000 up to \$729,750 for 2008. These increases in loan limits will benefit areas where housing costs are higher than the national average.

Mortgage rates on loans that currently exceed these loan limits are much more expensive than for smaller loans. These higher rates have hurt demand for housing in high-cost areas. The provisions in the stimulus will lower borrowing costs for many Americans, including middle-class families in high-cost cities to those who may be facing foreclosure. More importantly, this will allow more homeowners to refinance their existing mortgages, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the interest freeze for some subprime borrowers brokered by the Treasury in December. This is because more borrowers will be able to take advantage of the freeze to refinance into new FHA loans.

Finally, this bill will promote small business investment in equipment, which will spur job creation here at home. The bipartisan plan doubles the amount small businesses can immediately write off their taxes for capital investments made in 2008 from \$125,000 to

\$250,000, for purchases of new equipment of up to \$800,000 (from \$500,000). It also provides immediate tax relief for all businesses to invest in new plants and equipment by speeding up depreciation provisions, so that firms can write off an additional 50 percent for investments purchased in 2008.

While more needs to be done, I am confident that this bipartisan economic stimulus package will help many American families in the weeks and months ahead.

IN HONOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the University of Delaware Department of Public Safety for being recognized by the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, an independent organization created by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the National Sheriffs' Association and the Police Executive Research Forum. The importance of public safety officers within our community, and in particular within the University of Delaware, cannot be underscored enough. I am proud to represent a State that is home to such selfless and dedicated officers as those at the University of Delaware Department of Public Safety.

The University of Delaware is now a member of an elite group of public safety agencies in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Barbados that have received this prestigious, international award. The men and women of the Department have shown great dedication and commitment to providing quality service and protection to all students, faculty, and staff at the University of Delaware campus.

Employing only a total of forty-two officers on its Wilmington and Lewes campuses with approximately twenty security offices, the Department of Public Safety has no easy task as the University of Delaware has a large enrollment with students living on and off campus in the town of Newark. Despite this challenging task, the department has provided and continues to provide the highest quality protection and service to the University of Delaware community.

The citizens of Delaware deserve to know that the University of Delaware Department of Public Safety, has taken extraordinary steps to demonstrate their professionalism and pride in delivering quality public service to the University of Delaware community. I am tremendously proud of the Department of Public Safety and would like to commend and thank the men and women of the Department for the sacrifices and commitment that they make on a daily basis. The bravery and hard work of all those involved with this outstanding organization is responsible for making Delaware a safer place to live.